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## Ham and Hall's "Already Compromised: Christian Colleges Took a Test on the State of Their Faith and the Final Exam Is In" - Book Review

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Ken Ham and Greg Hall

*Already Compromised: Christian Colleges Took a Test on the State  
of Their Faith and the Final Exam Is In*

Green Forest, AR: New Leaf / Master Books, 2011 pb 238pp \$13.99

ISBN 978-0-89051-607-2

*Already Compromised* reports the views of senior administrators, and science and religion department chairs at American Christian colleges on questions of Scripture, God, the Noachic flood, origins, and the distinguishing qualities of Christian colleges. Ham and Hall hired professional researchers to do their fieldwork, and they wrote their book based on more than 300 interviews, truly a wealth of data.

Readers will discover, however, that these authors fail to nuance their data. *Already Compromised* is an extended criticism of those Christian colleges that fail to teach Ham and Hall's views of a literal 6 days × 24 hours creation, a young earth, and a few other doctrines usually packaged with those views. They note at one point that several survey participants had answered some questions "incorrectly" (p. 83), and at another that "only 24% of the 312 people surveyed answered every question correctly" (p. 35). Such openness about their biased framing of their research might lead some readers to question Ham and Hall's conclusions when, before they had commenced their research, they already viewed the leaders of

Christian colleges as “amazingly confused.” With research data in hand, they now had “the statistics . . . to show it” (p. 87).

For Ham and Hall, a high view of Scriptural authority demands that one adopt their reading of Genesis 1 and 2. In fact, the title grows out of this demand. In their words, “The compromise that we’re seeing in Christian colleges always centers on this: what we believe about the inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of Scripture. *This is the issue.* The authority of Scripture is a central point of faith. If you don’t get the first two chapters of the sacred text, you cannot get the rest right either” (p. 33, italics theirs). Note the leap between the last two cited sentences; Ham and Hall identify the theological bedrock as Scriptural authority and immediately stipulate that such authority rests on their reading of Genesis 1 and 2.

Ham and Hall use the phrase “Christian worldview” throughout *Already Compromised*, and they make their belief clear that having a Christian worldview implies agreeing with them about the earth’s age. In fact, Ham argues for nine pages why a young earth reading of Scripture is the only responsible reading. Appendix A, “Speaking of Newspeak,” includes a 35-page catalog of compromised Christians facing censure for their collective failure to agree with Ham.

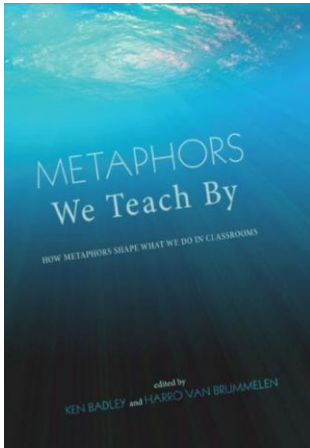
In chapter 1 they write that evolution “is the dominant worldview theme in our culture . . . in opposition to biblical creation” (p. 23). They repeat this in the last chapter, saying that “the area of Biblical history in Genesis that relates to geology, astronomy, anthropology, biology, etc., . . . is also the area where the world’s attack against the gospel of Jesus Christ is most heavily pointed” (p. 163). Many would argue that material prosperity, with its attendant destruction of the physical world, is the dominant theme in contemporary culture. At this point, Ham and Hall miss a rich opportunity, an omission sadly rich in irony. Authors so concerned about the creation might give a few paragraphs out of 240 pages to its care (as God mandated). Alas, care for the earth garners not a word in this needlessly pugnacious volume. This omission, when combined with the overall tone of *Already Compromised*, may actually perform a disservice to those Christians who, inasmuch as they believe in a young earth, share some important convictions with Ham and Hall.

In their words, Ham and Hall would rather send their own children “to a state institution than send them to . . . wolves who are dressed in sheep’s clothing” (p. 140). For them, “perhaps the worst option for a

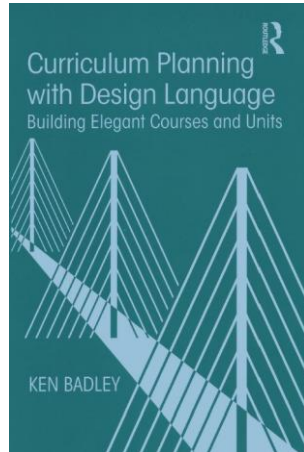
student is going blindly into a so-called ‘Christian’ college that is compromising the authority of the word of God” (p. 138). Thus, the real enemy is the compromised church, not the world. Given this tone—and with respect—I cannot recommend this book to anyone. Steve Garber’s *The Fabric of Faithfulness* (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity, updated in 2006) or Al Wolters’s *Creation Regained* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) would give students more helpful insight into worldviewish thinking, as would any of the titles by James Sire (whom they mention). They also aim their book at parents, but those parents wanting the names of “the seven or eight real conservative Christian colleges in America” (p. 55) could go to Ham’s website and save themselves the cost of this book.

*Ken Badley*

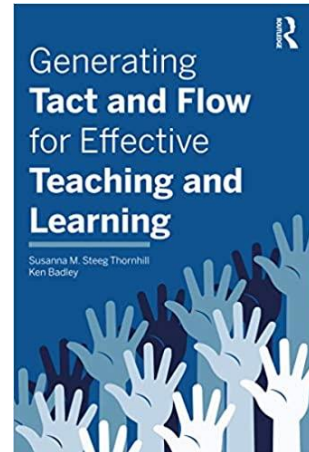
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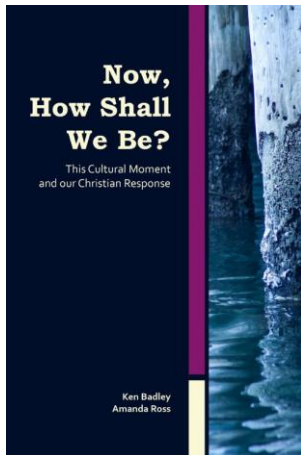
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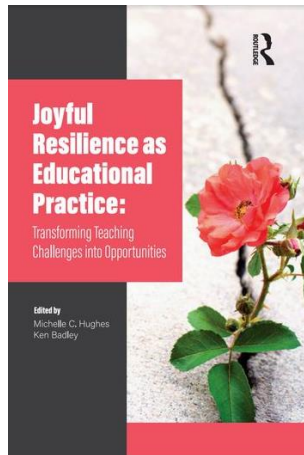
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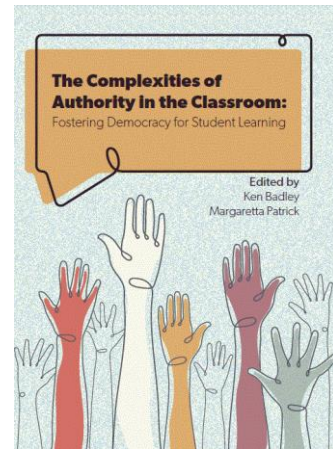
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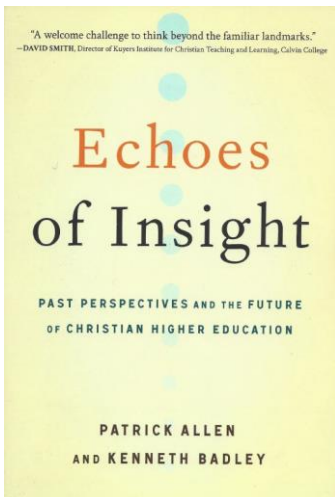


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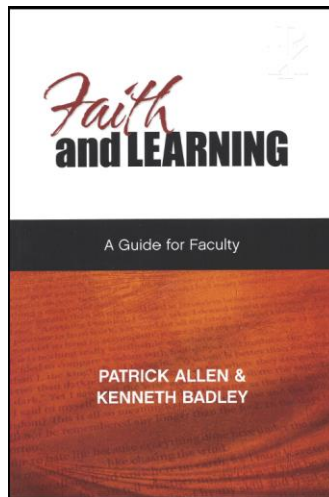


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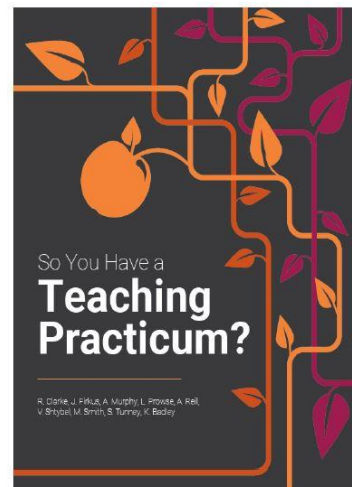


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